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ABSTRACT

This report provides education leaders and policymakers with a lens to examine model professional development in education and the private sector. The purpose of this study was to increase understanding of how organizations support or fail to support a work culture that values ongoing education, and to better understand what comprises the environment, desire, and means in which effective staff development and training take place. An exemplary private-sector corporation and an exemplary school district were studied to compare professional development processes and staff training, and to develop descriptions and explanations of how professional development becomes infused into the culture of an organization. Findings include: (1) to legitimize professional development, it is important that leadership is convinced of and committed to its value; (2) professional development must be coordinated with organizational goals; and (3) employees must recognize that professional development has multiple functions in achieving evolving organizational goals. Findings suggest that providing teachers with time for professional development during the school day and year is paramount to building a culture of professional growth, that teachers should be acculturated early into an environment that values continued learning, and that aligning school goals with the goals of professional development should be a continuous process. (Contains 44 references.) (RT)

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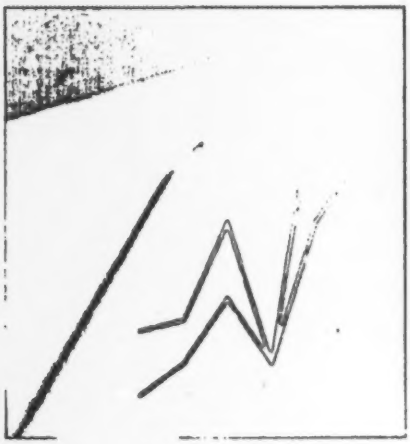

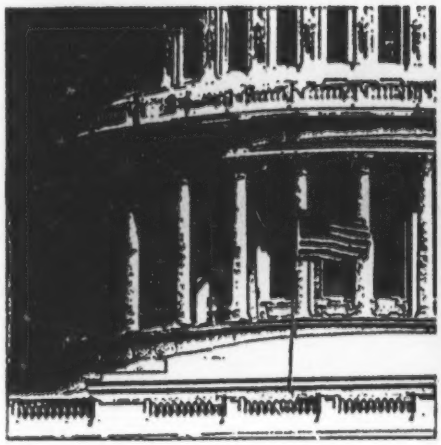

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR: FOLLOWING THE LEADERS

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Professional Development in Education and the Private Sector:

Following the Leaders

November 2000

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Executive Summary

This report provides education leaders and policymakers with a lens to examine model professional development in education and the private sector. What does effective professional development in each sector look like? How do approaches differ? What can education learn from the successes of private-sector professional development programs and policies?

In 1998, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory commissioned a study of one exemplary private-sector corporation (BlueRibbin) and one exemplary school district (Reeching Heights) to compare processes and outcomes of professional development and staff training, and to develop descriptions and explanations of how professional development becomes infused into the culture of an organization. By identifying some of the strengths and weaknesses of "the best of the best" in the two sectors, the results of the analysis are intended to be used to design policy recommendations that leverage change in professional development in public education.

The purpose of this study was (1) to increase understanding of how organizations support or fail to support a work culture that values ongoing education, and (2) to better understand what comprises the environment, desire, and means in which effective staff development and training take place.

The research study detailed here was not designed to be a comparison of professional development in public education and the private sector. Rather, this study is an organized examination of two exemplary sites that holds lessons that have potential implications for how professional development in education is supported and funded in the future.

Summary of Findings

Cultural Alignment of Professional Development

Both case-study sites provided examples of the following elements that can build an organizational culture that supports professional development:

- To legitimize professional development in an organization, it is important that leadership is convinced of and committed to its value, as evidenced through the funding available and the messages transmitted to employees.
- Professional development must be coordinated with organizational goals. In this study, both professional development programs were successful largely because of the status and responsibility for coordinating staff development and training programs that was accorded employees by senior management. The process of engaging employees and management in a continuous cycle of needs sensing and feedback on staff development and training is an example of a highly coordinated system of continuing education that does not link funding levels for professional development to outcome criteria for performance.
- Employees must recognize that professional development has multiple functions in achieving evolving organizational goals. These functions can include:
    1. The recruitment of high-quality staff
    2. The development and maintenance of a strong and appropriate organizational learning culture for both new and experienced employees
    3. The development of technical skills for employees
    4. The development of effective problem-solving strategies among employees
    5. The legitimization of a personnel assessment system that emphasizes individual work performance (by giving all employees the resources to improve their performance)
    6. The retention of high-performing staff who consider changing jobs an interruption of their professional growth

Organizational Alignment of Professional Development

Both sites also provided examples of how schools and districts might restructure their organizational approach to continuing education, including a variety of elements that might make professional development more effective. The examples include the following:

- Decisions about funding for professional development tend to be considerably more process heavy and involve more players, such as the school board, the teachers' union, the superintendent, intermediate school districts, school principals, etc.
- Professional development is defined as one of the tasks that employees accomplish on the job rather than "in addition to" the job.
- Building time into each employee's job for continuing education is a critical element in designing an organizational approach to professional development.

Implications and Policy Priorities for State and Local Education Leaders

There are three areas where the results of this research provide lessons for how professional development is introduced and sustained in schools.

1. Providing teachers with time for professional development during the school day and year that is not used for administrative purposes is paramount to building a culture of professional growth.
2. It is also critical to acculturate teachers early into an environment that values continual learning and uses resources, such as technology, differently to provide an infrastructure and delivery system for school-based professional development.
3. Aligning school and district goals with the goals of professional development should be a continuous process that assesses needs and measures progress toward meeting the goals.

The full report provides education leaders, as well as state and federal policymakers, with initial language to begin designing policies that support an integrated, highly accountable system of professional development in schools and school districts.

"We need to deepen our understanding of what good professional development opportunities look like in different contexts, through concrete images, examples, and experiences."

Linda Darling-Hammond, 1998

Introduction

Policymakers and educators are beginning to recognize that too many teachers lack the knowledge, skills, and training necessary to meet the needs of their students. Though education researchers and school reformers have provided many examples of good professional development in schools, study after study shows that professional development continues to be delivered in a piecemeal fashion. Current professional development programs are largely unrelated to the school mission and too often are inconsistent with changes in curriculum, assessment, and known best practices. Despite rhetoric from state and local education leaders, professional development rarely captures the attention given to more popular issues such as standards, assessment, and accountability. In addition, professional development is frequently the first victim of budget cuts.

Meanwhile, voices both within and outside education are lauding the successes of professional development in the private sector. In recent years, private-sector approaches to professional development have changed the style, content, and delivery of every aspect of staff training and development. Educators have embraced the language of private-sector professional development to call for the reform of professional development for teachers—new models of teacher training should become "outcome-oriented," "performance-based," "flexible," "continuous and seamless," and so on—however, these new models have been slow to permeate schools.

The following report provides education leaders and policymakers with a lens to examine model professional development in education and the private sector. What does effective professional development in each sector look like? How do approaches differ? What incentives are in place to support the successful implementation of professional development? How are resources allocated, decisions made, and organizational cultures changed? What can education learn from the successes of private-sector professional development programs and policies?

Professional Development in Education

Few educators would deny that professional development in most school districts has had a small, ineffective role in the professional lives of teachers and a little impact on student learning (Hawley & Rosenholtz, 1984). But participation in staff development programs has long been a requirement in state recertification and local bargaining agreements. Historically, continuing education for teachers has taken the form of teacher institutes in which experts lecture audiences of 100 or more teachers. Whether teachers gained knowledge or new skills as a result and whether those skills translated into more effective teaching was not of much concern to either researchers or school administrators.

It was not until the 1970s that educational research focused on staff development and how teachers transform new learning into classroom practice (Lieberman & Miller, 1978). Teachers' continuing education began to be considered an important factor in school improvement where previously, staff development focused solely on improving teachers' subject-matter competence.

By all accounts, both forms of professional development described above are still in practice in schools across the country. In fact, in a recent study that asked teachers about their worst professional development experience, 70 percent of respondents described school or district inservice sessions (Sandholtz, 1999). This outcome echoes a similar study undertaken 30 years ago that found that unlike school-based experiences, the teacher institutes "were much less successful in helping teachers to change the methods of their teaching, or to use different materials or media" (Gray, 1970, cited in Lieberman & Miller, 1978, p. 8).

There are many frequently recommended features of "good" inservice programs, including:

- Programs should be lengthy, not brief.
- Teachers should help define the content, not have topics imposed on them.
- The learning should be integrated with classroom practice, not delivered in one setting.
- Teachers should form learning communities, not work in isolation (Kennedy, 1998).

Even after more than 30 years of studying teacher learning in the workplace, most inservice activities for improving student and teacher learning are still irrelevant.

State or Local Control?

According to Ward, St. John, and Laine (1999), professional development was largely funded and controlled by states in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today, however, 80 percent of public school teachers experience professional development as school- or district-sponsored workshops and inservice programs (Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 1998). As teacher quality moves back into the education limelight after years of debate about curriculum and governance issues, states are looking for ways to support professional development and have more control over outcomes. With both state and federal government budget surpluses, requests for funding professional development for teachers also have increased.

According to researcher Robert Stout (1996), two general policy goals have been associated with staff development in this century: general upgrading of teacher skills and preparing teachers to accomplish new tasks. In addition, most states require some form of professional development for teachers to renew their certification; however, few states provide any guidance on the content or pedagogy of that professional development. A few attempts to regulate professional development have, for example, specified the number of required hours for courses, mandated that examinations be given, or dictated content in response to a hot curricular issue. As a result of the lack of requirements for professional development, most teachers meet new certification requirements by accumulating college credits toward another degree and, eventually, a salary increase as articulated by most local collective bargaining agreements. Even in states that do provide guidance and financial resources to support professional development (e.g., Florida and Kentucky, see Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 1998), adequate teacher time, the use of substitute teachers, and access to effective professional development opportunities remain significant issues.

Teachers are motivated to participate in professional development by a number of policy incentives, including salary enhancement, certificate maintenance, career mobility, and the opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge to enhance classroom performance. It is this last motivation that remains most elusive for state and local policymakers. Increasingly professional development for teachers is being required as part of a school improvement plan: Most state and federal funding programs require schools and districts to account for how they spend their resources and often designate amounts for professional development. However, little evidence exists that the states or the federal government actually track the use of those dollars for professional development or evaluate whether any change in student or teacher learning resulted from the professional development opportunities within the school improvement plan.

Professional Development in the Private Sector

Frederick Taylor is widely considered to be the founder of corporate management theory. His work, The *Principles of Scientific Management* (1915), set the stage for a dialogue on human resource management. At the core of his Scientific Management theory are these maxims:

- Simplify each task
- Reduce conflict
- Cooperate
- Increase output
- Develop people to their capabilities to do the simplified task they have been given (Weisbord, 1987)

The purpose of training during the Taylor era was to assist employees in learning and perfecting rudimentary tasks. However, Henry Gantt—best known for the development of the planning charts—disagreed with Taylor's vision of employee training. According to Marvin Weisbord, Gantt did not attempt to overcome worker skepticism to change; rather, he had machinists experiment with new methods until they discovered how to earn a bonus on the basis of high performance. "Whatever we do," wrote Gantt, "must be in accord with human nature. We cannot drive people; we must direct their development" (Weisbord, 1987, p. 42).

In the mid- to late-1940s, Kurt Lewin gained popular recognition for his practical techniques in organizational learning. Lewin's work may be characterized by one defining principle: We are likely to (1) modify our own behavior when we participate in problem analysis and solutions, and (2) carry out decisions when we have helped make them (Weisbord, 1987). Lewin supported a new style of corporate leadership, one that encouraged group learning, de-emphasized authoritarian leadership, and focused on analyzing organizational forces that impede change.

Although Lewin's approach generated a great deal of excitement about training as a management strategy, very little was known about the effectiveness of training.

In 1949, W. McGehee conducted an extensive review of the existing research in the field of training. He stressed the importance of the following:

- Trainee needs assessment
- Trainer training
- Evaluation of training effectiveness (McGehee, 1949)

During the following decades, research on training attempted to address these key issues.

In 1992, Scott Tannenbaum and Gary Yukl developed an extensive review of the existing corporate training literature. They found that in the years since Lewin's work, training and staff development in the private sector had matured into a legitimate discipline that used research, theory, and informed practice. Yukl and Tannenbaum found training techniques and theory to be much more complex than those of Taylor's day. Where Taylor sought to increase productivity through increased management planning, today the most innovative staff development efforts focus on transforming the organization into a place where learning is continuous.

According to Yukl and Tannenbaum, the focus of staff development between the 1970s and the early 1990s shifted from training on a specific skill to integrating training with perspectives on organizational theory and individual differences. For example, Motorola has provided its employees with ongoing training in specific skill areas since the early 1980s. More recently, Motorola has shifted its emphasis away from skill training to team-based problem solving with the goal of improving quality management and customer satisfaction. Motorola executives believe the company's commitment to professional development has contributed to strong financial results and to its being a leader in

the cellular phone industry. During the early 1990s, Motorola's annual sales increased by an average of 18 percent (Grant, 1995). Motorola is an example of how the private sector is changing the delivery and content of professional development so that training and learning are no longer isolated events but an integrated, continuous part of the way corporations operate.

The Challenge of Present-Day Training in Education

Organizations in the corporate sector appear to have developed effective theory and practice for moving from the Tayloristic model of management and staff development to the modern learning organization. Most educators would like to create institutions characterized by continual learning, but most remain bogged down by the remnants of Taylorism. Taylor sought many of the same goals of the current-day business manager, but the techniques of his era resulted in top-heavy organizations composed of unsatisfied workers. Weisbord writes, "Taylorism became synonymous with speed-ups, employer insensitivity, people turned into robots—doing more work for the same pay instead of working smarter, producing more, and taking home fatter paychecks" (1987, p. 61).

Even in education, a good deal of money is spent on professional development, but as most teachers would attest, traditional inservice activities tend to be disconnected from issues of curriculum and learning, fragmented, and noncumulative (Cohen & Ball, 1999). According to one teacher, "Most inservices add more work without a direct and tangible benefit to my students. I don't see the value" (Sandholtz, 1999, p. 11). No one wants organizations that work in this manner; training and staff development efforts delivered in a disjointed, piecemeal fashion produce Tayloristic results.

Few educators need to be convinced of the value of the learning organization. Yet, few education leaders or policymakers know how to achieve it. In order to redirect the educational workplace, argues John Woods (1995), "three deeply held beliefs which are structuring the educational workplace must be challenged and transcended." These three beliefs are:

- People are fixed, knowable quantities, capable of only limited learning, each having their own separate place, role, and job. People are a market commodity, expendable and replaceable.
- In organizational relationships, there must be a dominant person with superior knowledge, ultimate authority, and power to reward and punish. Others comply and do their assigned tasks accordingly.
- The organization is master of its domain, focused inwardly on efficiency and simplicity and function. The organization meets boundary conditions and outside demands when it perceives those demands are in its best interests (Woods, 1995).

The history of training and staff development in education suggests that these beliefs are entrenched. The implications of Taylorism further color the way educators view people, relationships, and work. In order to change the way educational organizations operate, policymakers and education leaders must develop staff development initiatives that attempt to combat these deeply held beliefs. This will not occur by simply importing the latest training fads and techniques from the private sector; it will require policies that reflect a new way of thinking about how learning occurs and the role of educational organizations in learning.

There is an abundance of material on what constitutes good professional development for teachers (see, for example, Sparks & Louks-Horsley, 1992; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996; Little, 1993; Thompson & Zeuli, 1997; Zimpher & Howey, 1992). Despite the availability of professional development research and access to examples of best practices, only a small fraction of schools incorporate these ideas, and most states have been unsuccessful at replicating

good models of professional development reform. Developing a local culture that values the critical role continuing education plays in ensuring a steady supply of effective teachers remains elusive to policymakers and education leaders. Smylie (1996) posits that despite what is known about effective professional development for teachers, "in education, professional development as generally practiced has a terrible reputation among scholars, policymakers, and educators alike for being pedagogically unsound, economically inefficient, and of little value to teachers" (p. 10).

A Tale of Two Sectors: Differences and Similarities

Modern theories of organizational change and adult learning, as well as the integration of technology in the content and practice of professional development, have shaped private-sector training and staff development to the point where it looks very different from that in the education sector. According to Nell Eurich (1990), one reason the private sector has gone beyond education in providing effective professional development is because products change so fast; companies feel compelled to continually improve their employee education programs just to keep up with product design.

In the private sector, U.S. firms spend on average about 2 percent of overall payroll expenditures on training and development (Bassi, Cheney, & Van Buren, 1998). According to William Ouweneel, program manager in the corporate education department at IBM, "Education is a given in our business...the question here is never if we should train—it's how do we train?" (Castner-Lotto, 1988, p. 257). However, similar to some of the barriers preventing the spread of good professional development models for teachers is the private sector's struggle to provide some degree of consistency, or standardization, through the centralized development of courses and instructional materials. At the same time, companies struggle with the delivery of training and development that is adapted to meet the needs of a particular locale.

Another similarity with education is what Fred Kofman and Peter Senge (1995) characterize as three "cultural dysfunctions" that prevent organizational learning. Kofman and Senge argue that:

- Because organizations respond to challenges in a fragmented manner, solutions are often piecemeal and insufficient.
- While competition tends to drive the need for professional development, it often leads the organization to focus only on short-term, measurable results. "Fascinated with competition, we often find ourselves competing with the very people with whom we need to collaborate."
- Most organizations are limited by an approach to learning that is primarily reactive. In other words, most learning is usually in response to some outside force that often prevents the systematic improvement of products and process.

How companies overcome these "cultural dysfunctions" has significant implications for school administrators and state policymakers struggling to implement a more holistic approach to professional development for teachers.

Case Studies: A Closer Look

In 1998, the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory commissioned this study of one private-sector corporation and one school district to compare processes and outcomes of professional development and staff training, and to develop descriptions and explanations of how professional development becomes infused into the culture of an organization. By identifying some of the strengths and weaknesses in the two sectors, the results of the analysis are intended for use in the design of policy recommendations for change in professional development in public education.

Case-study site visits included observation, structured and unstructured interviews, and collecting documents and Web-based information, all of which help describe the local configuration of the corporate staff development model and teacher professional development policy environments in some depth. As with most case-study research, the findings cannot necessarily be generalized across education or the private sector without conducting additional case studies or expanding the data collection techniques to include more examples. However, the purpose was not to compare exemplary professional development in the two sectors but to better understand the organizational and cultural characteristics and the context within which learning in the workplace occurs in both sectors.

Methodology

In an initial comparison between current policies, practices, and programs, and an analysis of the literature related to professional development and staff training in education and the private sector, the following three major themes emerged that were used as the basis for organizing the data collected (see Figure 1):

1. Structure and Culture of the Organization

The structure and culture of the organization within which professional development operates was examined. How do business and education leaders build consensus among employees, administrators, clients, and policymakers that professional development is a necessary and effective component in the learning environment? In order to answer this question, data was collected on such topics as the nature of authority structures in an organization, who controls decisionmaking, the allocation of resources for professional development, and the availability of a technological infrastructure.

2. Institutional and Individual Factors Affecting Professional Development

Data pertaining to the institutional and individual factors influencing an individual's commitment to participate in ongoing professional development was collected and analyzed comparatively. Institutional factors such as opportunities for financial and professional promotion, time for interaction with colleagues, evaluation and contract review, relevance of the content of the professional development program to employee work, and internal communication structures were examined to gauge the institution's support for professional development.

Individual factors influencing people's commitment to the value of ongoing professional development, such as opportunities for personal growth and general satisfaction with work, as well as individuals' motivation to learn and work collaboratively, also were studied. A comparative analysis of both types of factors influencing commitment to professional development helped address the questions about what types of leadership, leverage points, and incentive structures are used in private- and public-sector models of professional development to infuse effective training and staff development into the institution's organizational culture.

3. External Factors Related to Change in Professional Development

Data concerning factors that compose the local context of each case study were examined comparatively to better understand how large organizations address issues related to a changing economy, competition, state policy, the influence of professional organizations, and labor contract negotiations when implementing systems for professional development. Studying the local context of each case-study site helped identify the extent to which external factors influence an organization's ability to meet the needs of local employees and business affiliates through systematic, high-quality opportunities for educational improvement.

FIGURE 1
FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

	Structure and Culture of the Organization				Institutional Factors Affecting Professional Development				Individual Factors Affecting Professional Development			External Factors Related to Change in Professional Development			
	Authority and Control	Time	Funding	Technology	Leverage Points	Employee Interaction and Communication	Content Determination	Evaluation	Personal Growth	Satisfaction with Work	Collaboration	Economy	State Policy	Labor Contracts and Practices	Competition
Case 1 Private Sector															
Case 2 School District															

SELECTING THE SITES

BlueRibbin Corporation[1]

The private-sector site was selected from a list of ten companies recommended by education and training experts for their unique approaches to professional development and the similarities of their organizations to education. The final selection criteria for the private-sector site included:

- A well-established staff development program
- Evidence of recent restructuring of staff development programs
- Relevance of staff development and training methods to the education sector
- Willingness to participate as a case-study site

BlueRibbin Corporation, located outside a large urban center in the Midwest, emerged as a leader in providing ongoing, new, and innovative staff development and training programs in the private sector. In addition, BlueRibbin recently restructured its ongoing education programs to better meet the needs of the global marketplace by implementing the latest research on successful organizational change and characteristics of effective adult learning. In addition, BlueRibbin Corporation is engaged in training and staff development activities that share characteristics that an education audience would find relevant.

As a global leader in management and technology consulting, BlueRibbin Corporation maintains the perspective that there is no one answer to a problem—different conditions result in different solutions to seemingly similar problems. Like education, a diverse client base and a constantly changing work environment require BlueRibbin's professional development division, BlueRibbin Education (BRE), to continuously update its training and staff development programs. Unlike public education, BlueRibbin has embraced the challenges posed by its diverse client base and devotes, on average, more than 6 percent of its annual revenues to training. BRE, also based outside a large midwestern urban

[1]We have changed the names of the corporation and school district in this report.

center, comprises a team of learning professionals responsible for developing and delivering learning products that will engage employees with a wide range of backgrounds, cultural differences, and educational levels. BlueRibbin employees spend an average of 180 hours a year in training that builds their skills and knowledge.

During the 1980s, BlueRibbin changed its focus from providing a single service for clients to enabling consultants to support clients through a range of processes designed to affect the total business. At the same time, BlueRibbin changed the technologies, educational approaches, and classroom management procedures necessary to support the new business strategy. After conducting a Professional Development Needs Assessment Study, BlueRibbin identified a new set of training and education requirements for consultants that resulted in a state-of-the-art, technology-based, self-study training process. The restructuring of BlueRibbin's education and training program entailed a process and resulted in new products that appear to be informative for education leaders undertaking a similar restructuring effort.

Reeching Heights Public Schools

Potential local school district case-study sites originally were selected based on the relevance of their current work in professional development to study goals. The district case study is the basis for comparison with the private sector but, more important, it is an example of exemplary organizational support for staff development in the public-education sector. Recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education on the basis of its Model Professional Development Awards Program as well as recommendations from the leading professional development resource in the country, the National Staff Development Council, helped identify a preliminary listing of schools districts. Initial telephone interviews were based on a set of criteria adapted from the Model Professional Development Awards criteria (Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1999). Districts were evaluated on their suitability for the study based on their responses to the following four questions:

1. How is professional development a part of what all teachers do?
2. What structures support the implementation of professional development at individual, collegial, and organizational levels?
3. What resources and types of sustained support (financial and other) are available for professional development for individuals, groups, and the whole school or district?
4. Is there available evidence that the effectiveness of teachers has improved and student achievement has increased?

The district case-study site selection was not based on a random sample but was similar to the process of elimination used for the private-sector site selection: A district was chosen based on specific characteristics.

Preliminary telephone interviews with a number of school districts within a 300-mile radius of BlueRibbin Corporation resulted in Reeching Heights Public Schools emerging as a leader in the provision of continuing education opportunities for its 930 teachers and administrators. Reeching Heights Public Schools, located outside a large urban center in the Midwest, serves 11,000 students in Grades 9 to 12 in nine different schools.

Another criterion in selecting a district for this study was an assessment of the state policy context in which the district operates. In the state where both BlueRibbin and Reeching Heights are located, the legislature recently passed professional development legislation that will have significant implications for its state-level policy reform as well as ramifications at the local level. The state includes both urban and rural areas and serves approximately 2 million children in K-12 education, in 4,000 schools with 111,000 teachers.

The state education agency has been working since 1995 to address the claim that the state teacher preparation system is "complex and inconsistent," and that continuing professional development is neither "coordinated nor integrated" with the state's education goals (State Framework for Restructuring the Recruitment, Preparation, Licensure, and Continuing Professional Development of Teachers, 1996). As the state begins to define how to implement these policy recommendations, examples of how and what composes training and staff development in the private sector might prove to be helpful to state education leaders. As BlueRibbin shares the same geographic location as Reeching Heights, it is likely to have a primary interest in affecting policy change in education in its home state.

Finally, as BlueRibbin is considered a leader in allocating resources for staff development and employee training opportunities, the validity of the comparison with Reeching Heights is enhanced by the wealth of the school district community. This study looked for exemplary practices in for staff development and training: The goal in the case-study site selection was to identify the "best of the best" in both education and the private sector. This was especially necessary to counter the often-negative comparisons of performance in education with the high performance of private business. Reeching Heights is one of the most competitive learning communities in the country as evidenced by its consistently high performance on state and national standards of student achievement.

The Findings

Although both sites are unique in their approach to providing opportunities for continuing education in the workplace, the purpose of sorting the school-district and private-sector experiences into the same framework categories is to allow for comparison between the two. Summarized below are the major points identified according to each framework category in each site, some analysis of how they are the same or different, and highlights of lessons learned to improve the effectiveness of professional development in education.

Structure of the Organization

Authority and Control

The learning that occurs in the workplace is affected by how individuals are supported in the microculture of their immediate work environments and in particular by their immediate managers. A manager plays two very important roles: giving direct support and facilitating a climate for learning. Offering support to individuals, particularly at critical junctures, leads them to developing confidence in their capabilities. The manager can create workplace learning by changing the patterns of work allocation, the assignment of responsibilities, and the composition of the working group. The manager or school principal may also be the gatekeeper to formal education, whether in-house or externally provided.

Both BlueRibbin and Reeching Heights have a centralized professional development office that plans, develops, implements, and evaluates continuing education opportunities for employees. Decisions about the content of staff development and training, however, are a matter of negotiation between the Reeching Heights's Staff Support Services (SSS) office, school leadership, and the individual. By contrast, the "what and how" of training are company mandates at BlueRibbin.

There are few formal opportunities for BlueRibbin consultants to pursue noncareer-related learning experiences because professional development is highly centralized: BlueRibbin controls the goals and the content, especially for new employees. While Reeching Heights is characterized by central coordination of professional development activities, it has little centralized control over participant decisions. However, the centralization of staff development and training in both cases appears to reduce the institutional fragmentation so often characteristic of large organiza-

tions. Professional development continues to take place through a variety of channels in Reeching Heights (e.g., special education, compensatory education, curriculum services), but all those efforts are coordinated and centrally communicated at the SSS office.

Individual choice in a continuing education option is limited to well-defined steps on the career ladder at BlueRibbin and to school or district improvement goals at Reeching Heights. Reeching Heights' main goal is to strengthen institutional capacity by encouraging teachers to think of professional development as an integral part of an overall school or district improvement program. The need for a coordinated response to a school or district issue or challenge forces staff to come together to seek a solution, and this is where continuous learning takes place. The result is that individual growth and development is almost always tied to organizational goals. There is a little more flexibility in Reeching Heights than in BlueRibbin, because of the historical and ongoing negotiations between the district and the union, as well as district compliance with state-mandated programs for teachers. In addition, participation in professional development activities is not mandatory in Reeching Heights as it is in BlueRibbin, where staff development and training is considered part of the job.

Time

Time is at a premium in any profession, but time for continuing education is especially difficult to justify to the public in both education and the private sector. In addition, the organization may have standard procedures and work assignment processes that encourage and enable workplace learning, such as management development programs, apprenticeship schemes, induction programs, and work rotation systems. In contrast to the norm of several days a year or a few hours per week for staff development and training in schools, the National Staff Development Council recommends that 20 percent of the teacher work year be devoted to teachers' professional learning (Powell, 1998).

The amount of time for professional development that is institutionalized into the workday and work year of the teacher in Reeching Heights and the employee in BlueRibbin is vastly different. The school district makes available to teachers four institute days, two hours every two weeks, and up to three days of release time for subsidized professional development. All other professional development occurs outside the school day on the teacher's time. However, unlike many other school districts, Reeching Heights compensates teachers for their time in summer institutes or in the technology professional development program. At BlueRibbin, time is set aside for employees to participate in staff development and training. The total amount of time available is 10 percent of an employee's contract annually.

In Reeching Heights, any time out of the classroom is negotiated between teachers, school leadership, district administrators, and union officials, when appropriate. At BlueRibbin, there is an ongoing and unquestioned commitment to a consistent number of hours for professional development. Another difference is the emphasis on more structured support for new employees in the first five years at BlueRibbin. New employees are very deliberately guided through the BRE program to build skills and to learn the company culture. Aside from a one- or two-day induction program in Reeching Heights, there is no difference in the content or quantity of professional development made available to new and more senior employees.

Funding

Several studies have attempted to estimate the cost of professional development and training in both education and the private sector without much success. In this study, funding data will help provide insight into what the key policy and leverage points are in support of professional development.

Like time, funding for professional development at BlueRibbin is a given. The level of funding may fluctuate with the company's gross revenue, but the commitment to support ongoing staff development and training is a constant. To a lesser degree, the same commitment to funding is characteristic of the Reeching Heights Public Schools, since professional development is a shared value of the school board, district administration, and the union. Neither organization would be able to maintain a centralized continuing education function without some continuous funding. However, maintaining consistent levels of funding in Reeching Heights is more frequently negotiated between the various leadership groups than in BlueRibbin. In addition, funding levels in Reeching Heights are influenced by external factors such as changes in the state's funding formula, property tax values, demographic growth, and local politics.

Technology

The use of technology for the delivery of staff development and training is in line with more general workplace trends concerning the use of technology. However, few organizations have conducted cost-to-benefit analyses to determine whether training delivered in this way is more efficient or more effective. We examine how education and the private sector use technology for professional development and whether there is any evidence of increased access, efficiency, or effectiveness.

The Reeching Heights district uses professional development heavily to improve staff capacity to both use technology effectively and to integrate technology into student learning. But, unlike BlueRibbin Corportion, they use little technology for the delivery of professional development. Due to BlueRibbin's rapid growth, technology-based delivery systems became a more cost-efficient and -effective method to deliver training. As K-12 and higher education institutions make more courses available online, delivering professional development likely will become increasingly technology based.

It is interesting to note that the best evaluation data available in both case-study sites is on the more recently implemented technology-based professional development programs. There are two possible arguments for why this is the case: (1) the use of technology facilitates program evaluation, and (2) the increase in the use of technology-based professional development coincides with a heavier emphasis on accountability for expenditures in every industry.

Finding Time

It was considered revolutionary when Saturn introduced a process for building cars that provides 92 hours of reeducation per year for each employee as part of an employee's normal work year. In response to Saturn's reeducation policy, Albert Shanker noted:

"It is ironic that a bunch of people whose business is building cars understand so well the importance of educating their employees, whereas people in education seem to assume that teachers and other school staff will be able to step right into a new way of doing things with little or no help."

Source: Stigler & Hiebart, 1999, p. 143

Institutional Factors Affecting Professional Development

Leverage Points

The message sent by incentives in an organization play a significant role in shaping a learning context. For example, if pay increments are tied to graduate courses or professional development credits, teachers have little incentive to participate in school improvement planning that might generate tangible results for students but will do little to advance their careers. Thus, while many in the educational community may call for changes in professional development, the rewards for teacher development have not aligned with advances in the research.

In both cases, organizational leaders believe professional development participation depends on external motivation, such as salary increases, access to new skills development, access to professional resources, and professional expense reimbursement. However, teachers considering professional development options at Reeching Heights have more flexibility than employees at BlueRibbin. As a result, it is possible to characterize the array of professional development options in Reeching Heights as more complex and therefore more confusing to employees. If employees choose to study for advanced degrees while working at BlueRibbin, they do so with no guarantee of a return on their investments. At Reeching Heights, however, pursuing advanced degrees or experiences outside those sponsored and paid for by the district continues to be supported—due to contract provisions—despite the heavy emphasis on integrating professional development into the school's or district's improvement process.

Both case-study sites have a set salary schedule, but what qualifies individuals for advancement on the career ladder is different in each organization:

- Advancement at BlueRibbin is based on the number of years of experience and performance. Participation in professional development is not a factor in salary increases as it is simply considered part of the individual's job. Salary adjustments are made every three or four years based on performance, with an annual percentage increase given to everyone.
- Advancement on the salary schedule at Reeching Heights is based on the number of years of experience and the number of hours attained toward an advanced degree. Advancement on the salary schedule is also attained through moving into an administrative position in the school or district.

Both organizations offer a range of continuing education experiences for the duration of an individual's career. However, the number and flexibility of options for a BlueRibbin employee increase with the level of experience, with a heavy emphasis on prescribed training and staff development during the first five years. Reeching Heights employees enjoy the same range of options at every stage of the teacher's career, but teachers must take the initiative. Performance is more systematically evaluated at BlueRibbin and therefore may provide an indirect incentive for participating in professional development.

Finally, although not an individual incentive to participate in professional development, access to a centrally coordinated information infrastructure to get questions answered or to address concerns with training is associated with greater ease of participation and can be considered an institutional factor that affects professional development.

Employee Interaction and Communication

Professional communities can be characterized by the engagement of individuals around a common vision, the development of a shared portfolio of methods and resources, and a common language. However, strong professional communities have been shown to constrain workplace learning as well as promote it. What makes the difference is whether the work culture—beliefs, norms, and organizational policies—encourages or discourages continuous learning and collective responsibility. In education, research using the 1988 National Longitudinal Survey

data found significant positive effects of "collective responsibility for learning," a core facet of strong professional communities, on student achievement gains in math and science (Lee & Smith, 1996). Support for ongoing education and training might also include organization of an employee's workload to create opportunities for ongoing collaboration.

Both organizations have invested in some form of Web-based employee communication system. Although Reeching Heights's system is not very interactive, since it functions primarily as a Web-based catalogue of teacher work, the BlueRibbin Knowledge Exchange is meant to foster internal and informal interaction and communication. According to BlueRibbin interviews, people use the Knowledge Exchange to varying degrees based on how technologically savvy they are and whether it is relevant to their work. In addition, the BlueRibbin culture encourages collaboration through a team approach to work whereas teachers continue to be fairly isolated in their classroom environments.

Content Determination and Evaluation

McTaggart (1989) outlines a further set of working conditions that stifle teacher initiative and act as disincentives to collaborate. These include centralized systems of accountability and evaluation, and district-level decisions about curriculum development and textbooks. Similarly, Little (1984) writes that teacher evaluation has not traditionally been viewed as professional development, but more as a "perfunctory, supervisor-initiated, rite-of-practice" (p. 13).

At BlueRibbin, course content and curriculum are prescribed, especially at the beginning, because courses are taught by company managers who learn of the curriculum two or three days before teaching it. Therefore, instructors rely on the BRE office to provide materials that will be easy to follow and can be enhanced by their practical experience. In addition, course content is prescriptive because staff development and training are viewed as a primary vehicle for inducting employees into the BlueRibbin corporate culture.

There seems to be greater movement toward prescribing course content in professional development activities in Reeching Heights as well, but this trend is currently only evident in the technology program where the instructors and SSS office personnel collaboratively develop course syllabi. The Summer Institute and Internal University courses have to be approved by the SSS office or a cooperating university, but only a few courses are actually completely designed by the SSS office. At BlueRibbin, professional staff in the BRE office designs the entire basic curriculum. A significant difference, of course, is that the District SSS office employs fewer than five full-time staff while the BRE office at BlueRibbin employs 350 people (5 percent of total BlueRibbin staff). In both organizations, well-organized routines of activity, clear instructional goals, and the sequencing of skills from simpler to more complex are important to designing learning opportunities. Finally, BlueRibbin has a much more formal process for determining course content, beginning with a broad-based needs assessment. Courses are then developed with significant input and direction from the company's industry groups.

One of the case-study selection criteria was the extent to which data exist that can link investment in professional development to improved performance. In the prevailing model of staff development in education, teachers make the major consumption decisions and the costs of those decisions are passed on to the public without accountability for how they relate to improvement. In Reeching Heights, decisions about content, cost, and delivery are more centralized, with increasing consideration for the underlying question of expected return.

Although both case-study sites are significantly ahead of their competitors in the quantity and quality of evaluation data collected, the link to improved performance is still tenuous. Both sites rely on evaluation data that indicate an immediate response to improve the content of future professional development offerings, but data on employee or client performance are not used to make

decisions about participants or cost, or to determine whether the investment yielded a return in performance or profits. Better evaluation data were collected with the implementation of goal-based scenarios at BlueRibbin and the technology program at Reeching Heights. In both case-study sites, participating in professional development was not a formal component of annual personnel evaluations. Nonparticipation would result in termination of employment at BlueRibbin and eventually would freeze a teacher's salary at Reeching Heights, but how a person performs in a professional development activity is not taken into account.

Individual Factors Affecting Professional Development

Personal Growth

Intrinsic motivation for seeking formal learning in the workplace might include seeking a promotion, trying out new procedures, and participating in new ventures. March and Simon's (1958) influence model rests on a theory that individual behavior and change are motivated by opportunities to achieve valued rewards in the workplace. Recent work on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995) argues that psychological well-being is important and the affective dimension of learning should be recognized.

Reeching Heights case study participants spoke enthusiastically about the many opportunities for personal professional growth. The opportunity to take advantage of professional development is a contributing factor for selecting Reeching Heights as a place of employment. Participants interviewed in the private-sector case study also said they chose BlueRibbin partly because of its heavy emphasis on continuing education. According to Robert Stout (1996), at least four motives underlie teacher motivation to participate in professional development: (1) salary enhancement, (2) certificate maintenance, (3) career mobility, and (4) gaining new skills or knowledge to enhance classroom practice. Although a formal survey of case-study participants' ranking of these four motives was not conducted, interviews and observations in Reeching Heights conclude that although most teachers who participate in professional development are motivated by salary enhancement, many teachers pursue personal growth opportunities to enhance their classroom practice. Because salary increases at BlueRibbin are based so heavily on individual performance, case-study participants were more likely to identify skill and knowledge enhancement as primary motivators for professional development.

Satisfaction With Work

One of the best examples of a long-term commitment to implementing professional development is found in New York's District 2. In addition to the benefits that were documented for student learning, Elmore (1996) found that many teachers throughout the district report feeling that they are held to much higher expectations than peers in other districts, and usually did not see these expectations as negative. Rather than an additional burden, the emphasis on professional development was seen as a form of empowerment for teachers. The Teaching Firm (Education Development Center, 1998) found that in the private sector the alignment of individual goals with those of the organization increases an employee's satisfaction with work and feeling of self-worth.

There was little difference between how interviewees responded to questions about their level of satisfaction with work in both case-study sites. Professional development opportunities are an important factor in participants' work satisfaction. However, there is some difference in the relative importance of professional development compared to other work environment characteristics as a source of an individual's satisfaction. At Reeching Heights, for example, the salary schedule is among the highest in the state, yet the working conditions are similar to other districts in the surrounding area. Therefore, differences in the opportunities for continued professional growth are an important factor to what sets Reeching Heights apart from its competitors.

BlueRibbin's working conditions and benefits, on the other hand, are similar to other Fortune 100 companies, so the commitment to provide opportunities for continuing education is a significant reason for choosing employment at BlueRibbin. Companies are moving away from thinking about training as something done to or for employees; rather, training must become a continuous process where all critical links of an employee-customer supply chain develop a coherent view of the company's vision and values (Meister, 1998). BlueRibbin participants cited opportunities for advancement as more important to an individual's satisfaction with work than opportunities for continuing education; but since the two characteristics are inextricably linked, employees were hard-pressed to describe how to get one without the other. Satisfaction with work at BlueRibbin appears to depend on whether employees accept the company culture, placing a heavy emphasis on mandatory professional development.

Collaboration

In Kentucky, some studies have found that teachers had few opportunities to collaborate with colleagues as they attempted to change their practice. In a study of three districts, Keane (1995) reported that "all the groups interviewed implied a need for a system in which teachers could plan together and, in some cases, teach together in order to connect lessons across disciplines and garner support from their colleagues" (p. 163).

This category was intended to address individual motivation to collaborate informally as a result of professional development, but participants at both sites were hard pressed to give examples that were unrelated to a formal activity. BlueRibbin employees were a little puzzled by the question because 80 percent of their work is conducted through group problem solving or teamwork with clients. Their staff development and training activities, both in-classroom and technology based, require individuals to participate in a group process. Reeching Heights professional development is much more individualized. Because the district must attract employees to participate, it must be flexible and provide multiple options. Also, professional development is not a significant part of the workday or year, so most educators participate on their own time. Stigler and Hiebert's (1999) study of Japanese classroom teaching reform found that, similar to BlueRibbin's approach, participation in school-based professional development groups is considered part of a teacher's job in Japan. In the United States, however, the culture fostered by teachers' unions and embraced by many teachers is that professional development is an add-on to their full teaching load, and it often infringes on teachers' time with students or with their families.

External Factors Related to Change in Professional Development

Economy

The challenge to formal workplace learning may also stem from an organizational policy change or problem. Some examples might include (1) increasing the emphasis on quality, cost savings, and productivity; (2) the need to respond to externally imposed conditions or market forces; and (3) a reduction in staffing levels. An example specific to education is that schools and districts generally have little control over the percentage of state and local funding earmarked for public education. As a result, an unsuccessful levy to raise the local property tax might result in the need for budget cuts that translate into choices about how to allocate scarce resources.

Changes in the economy have a distinct effect on "business as usual" in both case-study sites. In the private-sector case study, the researcher expected to see the biggest change in funding levels for professional development as the result of a downturn in the economy. Case-study participants consistently refuted the researcher's expectation and explained that changes in the marketplace certainly

affect company priorities for professional development, but the opportunity to participate in continuing education remains stable. In fact, a slow economy may translate into more employees participating in staff development and training because it is more difficult for consultants to find time away from clients during periods of strong economic growth.

Although school district administrators also claim that economic changes do not affect funding levels for professional development, that assertion may be more difficult to sustain when community members balk at high property tax rates and state coffers are unable to make up the difference. However, in both instances, the clear determinant for sustaining professional development funding levels was a commitment by leadership to the importance for sustaining professional growth in the workplace.

State Policy

A 1998 study of trends affecting professional development in four districts showed that state policy was frequently a major force for generating professional development (National Foundation for the Improvement of Education). However, according to a study of district leaders' perceptions of teacher learning, state policies are understood by teachers only at a surface level and involve only minor changes in their existing conceptions of teaching, learning, and subject matter (Spillane, 2000). Nevertheless, arguing for more prescriptive policies that outline the details of local implementation is still viewed as an infringement of local control. In addition, state timelines for compliance set on the basis of political priorities rather than effective practice often complicate the district's ability to implement meaningful reform in professional development.

In the private sector, tax policy can act as an incentive for companies to invest resources in staff development and training. To attract large companies to areas of economic growth, state governments offer a variety of tax incentives including rebates for investments made by companies in providing new skill training for local employees. In addition, it has become increasingly common for the federal and state governments to provide companies with tax incentives for hiring and training individuals who heretofore received some sort of government subsidy.

Questions about the role of state policy in influencing professional development activities in this research study were intended primarily to further illuminate the school district experience. However, in neither case did state policy have much or any effect on the content or delivery of professional development. Reeching Heights Public Schools will be required to readjust how it reports professional development activities to the state, but in most instances it already exceeds new state requirements for teacher recertification. In fact, exemplary districts, such as Reeching Heights, would be an important source of ideas for policymakers who seek new rules for statewide application. Including Reeching Heights in state policy discussions also would ensure greater buy-in from that top-tier of school districts that are ahead of the rest of the state in identifying and implementing reform efforts.

Professional Organizations and Labor Contracts and Practices

Other disincentives might include specific occupational boundaries drawn by professions or union agreements. In addition, practices in the workplace environment that force highly skilled staff to engage in nonprofessional work, such as using teachers for hall monitors and replacing employee skills in the private sector with computerized systems, can dampen motivation to learn. De-skilling results from a lack of opportunity to practice and use skills on a regular basis.

Neither case-study site was hampered in its commitment to deliver professional development by a trade organization. Reeching Heights engages in collective bargaining and the union sets some guidelines for how teachers must be reimbursed for time not covered in their contract, but the district's labor contract

is not a barrier to professional development. The only noticeable difference between the two case-study sites—aside from the existence of a trade organization at Reeching Heights—are the additional negotiations between groups that share responsibility for the teachers' welfare in the district (e.g., school board, union, district administration). However, all responsible parties appear to support new resources for professional development, with occasional disagreement from the school board over spending priorities. The union and district administration agree on the need for professional development and a stable budget but will periodically disagree on how resources should be allocated.

Competition

Public perception about the value of education in this country can influence support for teacher preparation as well as the continuing education of teachers. "Schooling is valued by many Americans, but the social and economic supports for instructional effort—from parents' involvement with students' schooling to universities' and business firms' attention to students' records—are relatively weak" (Cohen & Ball, 1999, p. 14). Similarly, companies are dependent to a large extent on the public's view of the value and quality of their products. The success or failure of a company's product or service to generate a market share can heavily influence formal opportunities to engage in workplace learning.

While the interview questions originally were not intended to elicit responses that addressed competition for new employees, it was the primary competitive issue for managers in both sites. BlueRibbin made it clear that their investment in training and staff development was meant to differentiate them from competitors, and case-study participants said access to continuing education was a factor in their decision to work for BlueRibbin. Reeching Heights also saw competition with neighboring districts for new recruits as an ongoing challenge; however, salaries and working conditions continued to be more important to potential new hires than opportunities for professional development.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to increase understanding of how organizations support or fail to support a work culture that values ongoing education and to better understand what comprises the environment, desire, and means in which effective staff development and training takes place. As the nation increasingly focuses on the need to recruit and retain high-quality teachers, it is not surprising that research on teachers and teaching has become more concerned with the context of teachers' work and the need for meaningful change in professional development. By examining ongoing teacher development, policy analysts are deepening their understanding of the organizational conditions necessary to improving the quality of the current teaching force and ensuring the continual growth of the next generation of teachers.

Throughout the research study detailed here, the Framework for Comparative Analysis (Figure 1) provided the boundaries for the interview protocols and analysis of the data collected in the public-education and private-sector cases. Each Framework category was selected to describe a particular aspect of organizational culture and institutional support for staff development and training in public education and in the private sector. The Framework was not designed to be used as the basis for comparing professional development in BlueRibbin with that at Reeching Heights. Rather, it is a tool for organizing data collected that has potential implications for how professional development in education will be supported and funded in the future.

One way to measure the findings resulting from the cross-sector analysis in this research study is whether the private-sector experience can provide any new data that is relevant for education reform. A second measure is whether the experiences and examples gleaned from these two exemplary sites are relevant for the majority of public schools, which do not have the same access to resources and supportive leadership present at Reeching Heights and BlueRibbin. Although the framework categories have

provided a consistent structure for this research, the following is meant to summarize the study findings and place them in a context useful to school leaders and policymakers who are interested in improving professional development opportunities for teachers.

Summary of Findings

Cultural Alignment of Professional Development

Both case-study sites provided examples of various elements that can build an organizational culture that supports professional development. One important element is that leadership must demonstrate its commitment to its value through the funding and the messages transmitted to employees. Interestingly, interviews with employees about their commitment to continuing education at BlueRibbin did not garner the same sense of commitment communicated in interviews with company management. What this disparity begins to explain is that simply providing access to opportunities for professional growth is not an intrinsic motivator for many people; rather, organizational leadership must build a culture in which the values and norms that support continuing education are an integral part of everyday work.

Second, professional development must be coordinated with organizational goals. Much of the fragmentation common in professional development programs and policies in the education sector is the result of inappropriate structures and too little time. However, the lack of coordination does little to build a supportive organizational culture around the value of continuing education. In this study, both professional development programs were successful largely because of the status and responsibility for coordinating staff development and training programs that senior management accorded to BRE and the SSS office. One outgrowth of a more systemic approach to continuing education is the greater alignment between individual growth and organizational goals.

This does not mean that such coordination should take the form of establishing results-oriented criteria and measuring professional development outcomes according to those criteria. In the public-education sector, state policymakers clearly want to tie new professional development funding to results; professional development funding levels in education frequently are tied to state and local education leaders' perceptions of how effectively the investment will improve student learning. However, this strategy has at least two key problems:

1. It is very difficult to accomplish and thus may actually show that the leadership does not have an unwavering commitment to the potential of professional development.
2. It has a tendency to freeze the goals of the organization and thus of professional development rather than allowing them to evolve to meet the changing conditions that confront the organization.

The needed coordination may be accomplished more appropriately by establishing an ongoing procedure by which the goals of the organization are considered and reconsidered in the planning for professional development. The process of engaging employees and management in a continuous cycle of needs sensing and feedback on staff development and training at BlueRibbin is an example of a highly coordinated system of continuing education that does not link funding levels for professional development to outcome criteria for organizational performance.

The third element contributing to the legitimization of continuing education in an organization is that employees must recognize that professional development has multiple functions in achieving evolving organizational goals. These functions can include:

1. The recruitment of high-quality staff.
2. The development and maintenance of a strong organizational learning culture for both new and experienced employees.

3. The development of technical skills for employees.
4. The development of effective problem-solving strategies among employees.
5. The legitimization of a personnel assessment system that emphasizes individual work performance (by giving all employees the resources to improve their performance).
6. The retention of high-performing staff who consider changing jobs an interruption of their professional growth.

Organizational Alignment of Professional Development

Both case-study sites provided examples of how schools and districts might restructure their organizational approach to continuing education, including a variety of elements that might make professional development more effective. The literature on professional development in education and the private sector illustrates that continuous learning is an essential part of one's professional practice. Several years ago, *Time* magazine published the article "Tomorrow's Lesson: Learn or Perish," in which the author predicted that: "Learning will no longer stop with high school or even college. Specialized knowledge will become obsolete so quickly that adults will be encouraged to take frequent breaks from work, subsidized by their employers, to catch up" (Lemonick, 1992, p. 60). The private sector, as illustrated in the case study of BlueRibbin, clearly is taking this prediction seriously and has built an organizational approach that includes the norms, values, and incentives necessary to engage employees in a culture of continual learning. In contrast and despite exemplary reform in professional development in districts such as in Reeching Heights, the public-education sector continues to operate in ways that do not support lifelong learning or change the belief system about the value of professional development. According to a recent Phi Delta Kappa/ Gallup poll (1999), when asked how to attract and retain good teachers, 85 percent of respondents favored the use of "school-financed professional development opportunities" for teachers. Yet in focus groups also conducted in 1999, researchers found that although the principle of continuing education is enthusiastically endorsed, participants believe that teacher professional development days inconvenience parents and take instructional time away from students (Belden & Plattner, 1999). In the public-education sector, it seems there is a high value placed on the concept of continual learning for teachers that does not translate to actual practice: Schools and districts continue to operate professional development programs that are fragmented and disconnected from the goals of student learning. Clearly, professional development must be supported by adequate resources to accomplish organizational goals, in terms of both the direct support for learning opportunities and employees' time to take advantage of them.

In the study, the findings indicate that neither organization has wavered in its financial support for professional development despite changes in productivity or pressure to allocate resources to other priorities. Decisions about funding for professional development in Reeching Heights, however, tend to be much more process-heavy and involve more players, such as the school board, the union, the superintendent, intermediate school districts, school principals, and so on. As a result, every local decision about professional development requires time-consuming negotiations that are likely to disrupt the continuity of programming. In contrast, at BlueRibbin the need for consensus building among managers regarding funding for professional development is minimal, although the heavy investment of time can be a contentious point.

In terms of other forms of support for individual learning opportunities, both case-study sites provide a variety of incentives, such as career advancement, additional pay, and time

to interact with colleagues, to entice employees to participate in staff development and training. However, in most schools and districts, pursuing an advanced degree—often unrelated to school or student performance—continues to be the primary avenue for achieving a pay increase. This does not appear to be the case in the private sector where professional development is built into the expectations of employee work roles.

Building time into the employee's job for continuing education is a critical element in designing an organizational approach to professional development. There is a significant disparity between BlueRibbin and Reeching Heights in the time available to employees for professional development during the workday. In addition, there are differences between the two case-study sites in how employees are compensated for on-the-job learning. In the private sector, the time an employee spends in staff development and training is part of his or her salary. In education, time in professional development is not integrated into the teacher's salary; instead, it is compensated on an individual basis for the number of hours spent above and beyond the nine-month teacher contract. Although it is entirely possible that all the individually and school- and district-supported hours of professional development may exceed or equal the number of hours spent on staff development and training in the private sector (this study did not look at nondistrict-sponsored professional development such as additional academic degrees that teachers acquire to advance on the salary scale)—the end result still would not be the same. Because staff development and training in education is so fragmented and mostly unrelated to improving student performance, it does little to build a culture of professional growth or a shared value of the importance of continual learning.

Closely related to the lack of time for professional growth built into a teacher's workday is the lack of opportunity to collaborate and learn from one another. Lewis et al. (1999) found that "teachers who participated in common planning periods for team teachers at least once a week were more likely than those who participated a few times a year to report that participation improved their teaching a lot (52 percent versus 13 percent)" (p. 9). Collaboration among employees in the private sector was reported to be a routine aspect of the job, while teachers still work primarily in individual classrooms.

Implications and Policy Priorities

There are three areas where the results of this research provide lessons for how professional development is introduced and sustained in schools:

1. The need for time for professional development during the school day and year that is not used for administrative purposes is paramount to building a culture of professional growth among teachers.
2. The need for acculturating teachers early into an environment that values continual learning and uses resources such as technology differently to provide an infrastructure and delivery system for school-based professional development is also pivotal to creating a culture of professional growth.
3. The need to align school and district goals with the goals of professional development should be a continuous process that assesses needs and measures progress toward meeting the goals.

The following sections provide education leaders and state and federal policymakers with some initial language to begin designing policies that support an integrated and highly accountable system of professional development in schools and districts.

Implications for Schools and Districts

The need for more consensus building is paramount. Therefore, as seen in Reeching Heights, the visibility of a central coordinating office for professional development activ-

ities that is linked to community adult-education programming appears to have a positive effect on the public's perception of the value of professional development for teachers. The continuous support and attention given to reinforcing organizational culture and values by management reduces the need to renegotiate the importance of staff development and training.

One way to gauge support for continuing education is to examine the available resources for professional development. One ongoing problem for Reeching Heights, and public education in general, is that resources for professional development come from a combination of local, state, and federal sources, which makes it difficult to keep good records of how much funding is available and how it is spent. The disparate sources of funding also contribute to the fragmentation of goals and content characteristic of many public education professional development programs. Building consensus around the need for continuing education for teachers among state and local decisionmakers and the community necessitates better record-keeping on the part of schools and districts to better communicate how those dollars are spent.

Implications for Policymakers

In this study, unwavering financial commitment to support professional growth in both cases sent a consistent message to employees and constituents that professional development is a priority. To assist schools and districts with building a continuous funding stream for professional development and reducing programmatic fragmentation, state and federal policymakers should discontinue the practice of awarding categorical dollars that include separate pots of professional development dollars. Instead, professional development resources should be pooled at the state level and awarded to school districts on the basis of school needs with plans that show clear alignment between measurable goals and outcomes. State education agencies should be charged with the responsibility of overseeing local professional development resource implementation and ensuring that evaluation results are available to the public.

The research on adult learning suggests that continued professional growth is not simply a matter of scheduling an activity for the purpose of ensuring attendance or testing individual endurance. Successful professional development must be sustained over time and be directly related to—or integrated into—an individual's everyday work. State and federal incentives could be awarded to school districts that present a three-year plan to reallocate resources for the purpose of restructuring school schedules to allow for 10 percent of a teacher's time for weekly collaborative professional development. Successful proposals would include an overview of how the school and district goals for improvement would be aligned with opportunities for professional growth during the workday and how those opportunities would be sustained. In addition, districts submitting proposals would be required to reach agreement for a minimum of three years on the terms of teacher participation in the program from the chairs of the local teacher union, parent-teacher association, school board, and local chamber of commerce.

As more state education agencies consider proposals that require a one- to two-year induction program for new teachers, state policymakers should begin questioning programs that do not include opportunities for new teachers to participate in collaborative learning experiences with others besides their mentors. Building an organizational culture that values continuing education requires employee participation in joint learning experiences at every level. More effective use of technology as a source of information for new teachers and collegial networking for veteran teachers would help foster an organizational culture that values professional growth.

Implications for Further Research

Detractors of this study may suggest that the lessons here are idiosyncratic to the individual cases and cannot be generalized or adapted for improvements in professional development in most schools and districts in the

United States. However, it seems the emphasis on supportive leadership, a coordinated organizational approach, and legitimization of the need for professional development early in an individual's career are transferable to any setting. How local schools and districts choose to implement these findings is another issue entirely. A second phase of this study might extend the major findings identified in these two exemplary sites and attempt to create benchmarks that measure organizational support for professional growth in additional private- and public-sector cases, such as medicine, law, and government.

This study focused on characteristics of institutional support for and implementation of local professional development. Questions about the content of staff development and training in the private sector and its relevance for professional growth in schools and districts are increasing, but the answers are largely unknown. There is plenty of solid research on what constitutes good professional development in education; however, how it stacks up to good professional development in other fields may provide insights that further support the organizational and cultural findings resulting from this study.

Finally, the categories in the Framework for Comparative Analysis provide a new model to study individual and institutional support for organizational initiatives. Further research on this topic might extrapolate the use of the framework categories to multiple sites to test the validity of the findings resulting from the comparative analysis and whether those findings hold true in additional private-sector and public-education sector cases.

For more information on the study methodology and technical aspects on the report, please contact Sabrina Laine at North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

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